(b) CSIR has increased its interaction with industry and its contacts with various associations of commerce and industry.

Plan to melt the Himalayan Snow

1104. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved any plan to melt the Himalayan snow to augment water supply; and

(b) if so, at what stage the plan is and by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) and (b) Efforts are being made to undertake R & D activities in the field of seasonal snow melt so as to judge its operational viability and evolve packages of contingency plans of action in case of acute shortage of water in regions depending on snow melt.

Plight of Indian Workers in Iraq

1105. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a group of 32 Indian workers, including senior engineers and technicians, are trapped in a nightmarish situation in Iraq;

(b) whether these workers, recruited by a Chandigarh based construction company, have neither been paid nor allowed to leave Iraq for the last 3 years; and

(c) if so, the action taken by Government to help these workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (PROF. K. K. TEWARI): (a) to (c) Through the active intervention of the Government 594 of 630 workers of Punjab Chemi Plant have already been repatriated to India at Government expense. Efforts to repatriate the remaining workers are continuing and these workers are likely to return to India very shortly. The question of settlement of the salaries of these workers and their repatriation to India was linked with an agreement between the Indian contractor and the Iraqi client regarding completion or otherwise of the housing project. The Ministry of Commerce, the nodal Ministry for project exports, is actively involved for the past few years in working out an overall settlement with the parties concerned. These negotiations are at an advanced stage of finalisation.

Development of Dornier-328 Aircraft

1006. SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has decided to participate in the design and development of a 1990 generation regional airliner, Dornier-328; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Military Co-operation between Pakistan and China

1107. SHRI B. SATYANARAYAN REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the military co-operation between Pakistan nad China is being strengthened and there were reports of Pakistan acquiring hundred T-59 tanks from China in addition to the fleet of 1,100 Chinese tanks already in Pakistan;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and other military equipment which Pakistan has been obtaining from China;

(c) whether is it also a fact that Pakistani Chief of Naval Staff who was recently in Beijing had signed an agreement for the supply of two to three "W" submarines to Pakistan has been obtaining Chinese assistance in defence production as well; and

(d) if so, what are the details thereof and what will be its impact on the defence and Security of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government understands that military cooperation between China and Pakistan includes the supply of aircraft, tanks and other military hardware by China to Pakistan.

(c) and (d) Government have no confirmed information that any contract was signed for the supply of Chinese submarines to Pakistan during the visit. Government are, however, aware of the Chinese assistance to Pakistan in the field of defence production.

Government keep under constant review all developments having a bearing on the country's security and appropriate counter measures are taken.

Heavy Naval presence in Gulf

1108. DR. YALAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what steps are being taken by Government in view of heavy naval presence in the Gulf; and

(b) whether Government propose to initiate a dialogue with the concerned countries with a view to ensuring peace in the above zone?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (PROF. K. K. TEWARI): (a) and (b) Government have consistently stressed that the escalation of Great Power naval presences in the Gulf is aggravating tension in the region. These views have been conveyed to the parties concerned. Government have welcomed the acceptance by the Islamic Republic of Iran of UN Security Council Resolution 598 and are in contact with all concerned with a view to securing implementation of the resolution through the good offices of the UN Secretary General.

Acquisition of Guided Missile Frigates by Pakistan

1109. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Pakistan is acquiring some Brooke Class Guided Missile Frigates from United States to augment its maritime attack capability;

(b) whether Government possess such sophisticated naval ships to meet the challenges posed by Pakistan in the maritime border; and

(c) if so, what are the naval ships possessed by our country to save our maritime belt from Pakistan attack?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) It would not be in the national security interest to disclose details.